

## **Chapter One: Introduction**



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## Management Summary

A Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) is the primary report that documents and evaluates the history, significance and treatment of a cultural landscape, including any changes to its geographical context, features, materials, and use. The primary goal of this CLR is to provide the National Park Service (NPS) with a contextual evaluation of how the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site (NHS) is situated within regional ranching history and broader national historic themes.

This report includes Part I, Site History, Existing Conditions, and Analysis, which documents the evolution of the site's cultural landscape resources, and determines the origin and significance of existing landscape features within the site's boundaries. It includes a physical history of the landscape's evolution, historic photographs and illustrations, existing conditions documentation and base maps, a comparative analysis of existing and historic conditions, identification and evaluation of significant character-defining features, and evaluation of historic integrity.

Part II, Treatment, which recommends appropriate treatment guidelines, strategies, and plans for preservation and enhancement of cultural landscape resources, will be completed in the future under a separate task order.

## Historical Summary

The Grant-Kohrs Ranch, established by John Grant in 1862 and operated by Conrad Kohrs from 1866-1920, is an outstanding representation of the days of the open range cattle industry in the American West during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Grant's and Kohrs' dominance of the regional beef market demonstrated the possibilities available to entrepreneurs on the developing frontier, and the ability to run cattle over a virtual empire of open and free grassland. The National Historic Landmark period of significance for the site--1862-1919--extends from the initial development of John Grant's ranch to the dissolution of the greater Kohrs Ranch.<sup>1</sup>

While the current boundaries of the site encompass approximately 1,618 acres, this is only a fraction of what was once a much larger ranch. During the 1890s, the ranch extended over 27,000 acres, with feed, water, and grazing rights over ten million acres of public land that spanned across Montana, parts of Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and the Canadian province of Alberta, Saskatchewan. The Home Ranch, a term that historically defined the Grant-Kohrs ranch home and building complex and its adjacent lands, extended beyond the current boundary to the east approximately 1.75 miles and west from one to five miles to reach grazing leases on state lands and the Deer Lodge National Forest. Other holdings in the Deer Lodge Valley included Dog Creek Pasture (9,129 acres) and Humber Ranch (1,160 acres) to the northeast, and the Upper Ranch (also known as Nick Bielenberg place, 4,800 acres) to the southeast (see Figure 1-1).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ann Hubber, *National Historic Landmark Boundary Study, Grant-Kohrs Ranch* (Denver: National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office, August 31, 2001; approved 2002), 30-31.

<sup>2</sup> Ann Hubber, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Grant-Kohrs Ranch/Warren Ranch* (Denver: National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office, January 4, 2002; signed 2003), 5.

The Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS encompasses both the Grant-Kohrs Ranch home and building complex as well as the Warren Hereford Ranch and residence. Operated by Conrad Warren from 1929-1982, the Grant-Kohrs Ranch/Warren Ranch, which has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, represents the modernization of cattle ranching on the Great Plains of the American West, specifically in the era that began in the early 20th century and which marked the close of the open range. Conrad Warren, the grandson of Conrad Kohrs, moved to his grandfather's former ranch in 1929. In 1932 Warren assumed management of the Conrad Kohrs Company Ranch, and transformed the relatively small financial and physical remnants of his grandfather's once vast cattle empire into a modern cattle breeding and sales complex. Warren ran the ranch for over 50 years. The period of significance of the Warren Ranch is 1929-1958.<sup>3</sup>

Altogether, the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS represents changes in agriculture, and the continuum of cattle ranching from the days of the open range into the modern era. Its landscape encompasses the cultural and physical resources that help interpret the story of continuity of ownership and the evolution of western cattle ranching operations throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Administrative Context

Grant-Kohrs Home Ranch was designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) on December 19, 1960 as part of the Mission 66 program of the National Park Service.<sup>4</sup> The ranch, then owned by Conrad Warren, grandson of Conrad Kohrs, was one of five sites identified in a 1959 NHL "Westward Expansion: Cattleman's Empire" theme study as having exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States.<sup>5</sup> The ranch is significant under NHL Criterion 1 in the areas of Agriculture and Developing the American Economy.

In August, 1972 Congress authorized establishment of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site (Public Law 92-406, 86 Stat. 632) "to provide an understanding of the frontier cattle era of the Nation's history, to preserve the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, and to interpret the nationally-significant values thereof for the benefit and inspiration of the present and future generations."<sup>6</sup> Administratively listed on the National Register as a result of this designation, the ranch is nationally significant under criteria A and C in the areas of agriculture and exploration/settlement.

The National Historic Landmark Boundary Study for the ranch was signed and approved January 4, 2002. The boundary for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHL district established in the nomination encompasses all the extant resources historically associated with the ranch's period of significance, 1862-1919.<sup>7</sup> This boundary includes all the lands within the NHS boundary, except for the Warren Hereford Ranch and the development zone.

In 2002 the 20<sup>th</sup> century Grant-Kohrs Ranch/Warren Ranch historic district was nominated by the NPS to the National Register for its significance to the state of Montana under Criteria A and C in the areas of agriculture and architecture. It has been found eligible by the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and was listed July 11, 2003. Its period of significance spans the years 1929-1958, during which time Conrad Warren operated the ranch. The boundary for this district amends and defines the boundary for the National Register district listed in 1972. This

<sup>3</sup> Hubber, 2002, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas C. McChristian, *Ranchers to Rangers: An Administrative History of Grant-Kohrs Ranch* (National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Cluster, July 1997), 2.

<sup>5</sup> A later study of the southwest identified an additional four sites.

<sup>6</sup> Ann Hubber, 2001, 30.

<sup>7</sup> Ann Hubber, 2001, 29.

boundary encompasses all of the land within NHL boundary, as well as the land comprising the Warren Hereford Ranch. This boundary excludes the development zone.<sup>8</sup>

Within the site boundary of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, the NPS continues to conduct ranching activities involving livestock grazing, hay production, irrigation, fencing, and noxious weed control. The NPS preserves 88 structures on the List of Classified Structures dating from 1860-1960; a site-original 29,000 object museum collection; and intact 1860s-1980s ranch archives.

### *Interpretation*

The draft Comprehensive Interpretive Plan calls for an interpretive focus on the frontier, open-range cattle era, secondarily including conditions and events leading up to this period, and subsequent evolution of cattle ranching up to the mechanized feedlot operations. A variety and evolution of time periods are interpreted as visitors circulate through the ranch and are exposed to structures and scenes from different eras of the ranch's history. Primary interpretive themes are as follows:<sup>9</sup>

- The open-range cattle industry played a major role in American frontier history and has had a profound effect on American culture and environment, in reality, as well as romance.
- The American cattle industry resulted from unique and interacting environmental, economic, political, and social conditions. Over time it evolved into something quite different from its now-mythical heyday—all the while adapting to changes in those same conditions.
- The epic drama of the open-range cattle industry requires many stages, acts, and players: from the sweeping prairies of central and eastern Montana, to the home ranch; from the headiness of roundup and trail drive, to the comfortable routine of everyday life; from the cattle king, to the common cowboy; each place, each scene, and each character an important part of the whole.
- Grant-Kohrs Ranch and its people were unique and fascinating; yet they were also representative of the evolving American cattle industry.

### *Management Objectives*

The 1993 EIS/GMP/DCP proposed management of the park as a working ranch, which was in-keeping with its historic use and association. Management objectives of the park are as follows:

- To provide opportunities for the visitor to understand the cattle industry and its evolution from the open range of the mid-1860s, to mechanized feedlot operations that began in the 1930s and extended until establishment of the park in the 1970s.
- To maintain historic structures, buildings, objects, and landscapes in such a manner as to complement the ranch's primary purpose and enhance visitor understanding and appreciation of cattle ranch operations.
- To manage natural resources in such a manner as to compliment the historic context of the ranch and cattle ranching operations.<sup>10</sup>

Natural resource management supports the park's primary purpose of preserving and interpreting a working ranch. Several challenges are associated with the overall management strategy of

<sup>8</sup> Ann Hubber, 2002, 1-2.

<sup>9</sup> US Department of the Interior, National Park Service Rocky Mountain Region, *Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Environmental Impact Statement for a General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan* (March 1993), 10, 20.

<sup>10</sup> US Department of the Interior, National Park Service Rocky Mountain Region, *Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Environmental Impact Statement for a General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan* (March 1993), 3.

managing natural resources as part of a ranch operation that stresses natural processes and biotic resources. Since Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS is a working cattle ranch, questions arise as how to best balance the practices of agricultural use, hay production, livestock grazing, exotic weed control, wildlife and water quality protection and control, as well as the appropriateness of non-native grass species.

For instance, there are several challenges associated with the ranch's need to be economically viable, while at the same time, ensuring that the interpretive mission of the park not be compromised by commercialization. Vegetation and pest management practices, such as the use of controlled burning, herbicides, and pesticides must also be carefully taken into consideration to ensure that they respect the Best Management Practices employed by the NPS, are not harmful to the overall environment, and do not diminish the integrity of the site.

Other challenges relate to the maintenance and management of landscape features integral to working ranch operations, such as fences, gates, ditches, irrigation headgates, etc. As these features must be constantly maintained to operate effectively, their repair and reconstruction (when needed), must weigh historic construction and operation techniques and materials, with new technologies and costs.

Related to natural resource protection and interpretation are the approximate 1,100 acres of upland pasture west of the current park boundary that are held in private ownership and not managed by the NPS. This area has been identified as an area of land that is significant for its historic and visual relationship to the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, and should be included within the site boundary through the purchase of scenic easements or similar management strategy. The park is currently exploring a number of options for the future management of this land.

In addition to this is the near and long-term restoration of the riparian woodland along the Clark Fork River. Both the land and wildlife in this area have suffered damage resulting from upstream mining activities. Classified as a Superfund project, the federal government is currently conducting studies to determine how best to mitigate the effects of pollution. Any introduction of new species, particularly within the riparian corridor, must consider the historic uses of this area, as well as the native plant community structure, to evaluate how such action may impact both the ecological restoration goals and the historic integrity of the ranch. The results of these studies will have a direct impact on the ranch and will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

As the Park improves its interpretive mission, conflicts arise as to whether or not historic resources should be rehabilitated for administrative or interpretive purposes. For instance, the Warren residence has recently been rehabilitated to house NPS offices. As this resource is now under consideration for the interpretation of Warren's operation of the ranch, demands for much-needed administrative space will be shifted to other areas of the site, possibly requiring new construction.

While treatment recommendations are not included in Part I of this Cultural Landscape Report, the challenges mentioned above will certainly become the focus of further study. The historical research, existing conditions documentation, and integrity analysis found in this report is intended to lay the groundwork for future analysis, and the treatment recommendations that will follow.

## Scope of Work/Methodology

In September 2002, the NPS commissioned John Milner Associates (formerly the Charlottesville, VA office of OCULUS), working in collaboration with Rivanna Archeological Consulting, and Susan Maxman & Partners, Architects, to complete a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.

The goal of this CLR is to help establish preservation goals for the landscape and provide the basis for making sound decisions about agricultural and grazing management, treatment that supports those goals, and use, as well as aiding in maintenance and interpretation. The purpose of the scope of work for Part I of the CLR is to:

- document the evolution of the ranch's cultural landscape, including heritage livestock and crops;
- document and evaluate existing conditions of the cultural landscape, and to identify, describe, and assess character-defining landscape elements;
- provide a Statement of Significance, including identification of period(s) of significance; and
- evaluate the historic integrity of the landscape.

This report includes Part I, Site History, Existing Conditions, and Analysis, which summarizes existing knowledge of and research on the overall landscape of the park and on specific areas of interest to its management. Part II, Treatment, which recommends appropriate treatment guidelines, strategies, and plans for preservation and management of cultural landscape resources, will be completed in the future under a separate task order.

This Cultural Landscape Report is prepared in accordance with the guidance offered in the most recent versions of various federal standards documents, and conforms to National Park Service guidelines and other precedents, including the following:

- NPS Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process and Techniques (1998);
- NPS Management Policies (2001);
- NPS Director's Order 28 (Cultural Resources Management Guidelines, 1998);
- National Register Bulletin No. 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (1991)
- National Register Bulletin No. 30: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes (1999);
- The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (1996);
- The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines and Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation (1983);
- NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act); and
- AIRFA (American Indian Religious Freedom Act).

## Project Scope

The NPS scope of work for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS CLR includes the following items:

### *Administrative Data*

- preparation of an administrative data report section in consultation with the NPS

*Landscape Physical History*

- Conducting historical research of primary and secondary source materials relating to all cultural landscape elements within the project area. Levels of research for each period of landscape history are as follows:
  - Prehistory and recent tribal history to circa 1859. Limited to cursory research, with focus on summarizing known data contained in secondary sources and park documents. Emphasis is on determining broad patterns of land use within the study area.
  - Circa 1859 to circa 1866: Early Settlement of the Area and Establishment of the John Grant Ranch. Limited to cursory research, with focus on known primary and secondary sources to determine, to the degree possible, known landscape elements at the time of the ranch's establishment by John Grant to its sale in 1866 to Conrad Kohrs. Sources consulted are limited to known primary and secondary sources, including books, maps, and documents.
  - Circa 1866 to Circa 1910: Expansion and Consolidation of the Conrad Kohrs and John Bielenberg Ranch. Thorough research focused on understanding the overall changes of the cultural landscape within the Grant-Kohrs Ranch boundaries. Research includes development of structures, corrals, fencing, irrigation, pastures, cropland, roads, bridges, railways, etc.
  - Circa 1910 to circa 1930: Decline and caretaker status. Limited to cursory research, with focus on ranch's dissolution and retention as a remnant under administration of the Kohrs' Trust.
  - Circa 1930 to circa 1958: Conrad Kohrs Warren Era. Thorough research focused on documenting the evolution of the landscape from the management and post-1940 ownership of Con Warren to his Hereford herd dispersal sale in 1958. Research includes property acquisitions, herd management, farming practices, impact of modernization, and construction of structures and features in the earlier historic zone and Warren complex. This research relies upon known resources held by the NPS.
  - Circa 1958 to circa 1972: Post-Dispersal, Conrad Kohrs Warren Era. Limited to cursory research, with focus on ranch's cultural landscape during last phase of private ownership.
  - Circa 1972-Present: Recent Change. Thorough research focused on documenting the recent changes, repair, and maintenance of character defining elements of the cultural landscape under NPS administration since 1972, including the subsequent acquisition of lands in 1988 and the Warren Residence in 1993. This research also focused on historic ranch management practices, livestock breeds, and crops, and relied upon known resources held by the NPS.
- preparation of an annotated cultural landscape chronology outlining notable periods of the landscape development and key characteristics and components of the landscapes during the historic period(s) and preparation of a narrative physical history.
- preparation of landscape history maps and images that illustrate the evolution of the landscape over time.
- preparation of period plans with one graphic for each notable period of landscape development. Key characteristics and components of the landscapes present during the historic period(s) are identified on the maps.

*Existing Conditions Documentation*

- conducting field surveys to inventory and document existing conditions in the project area;



- where existing base maps are inadequate, conducting additional fieldwork in the study area and preparation of an accurate planning-level base map indicating all built and natural features;
- photographic documentation of the site including representative features and incorporation of selected existing conditions photographs into the report;
- undertaking, when practicable, existing conditions photography in locations of historic ground photographs for the purpose of comparative analysis;
- preparation of existing conditions photographic station point maps documenting the location and orientation of photographs;
- preparation of existing conditions base maps for the entire ranch and each of its landscape zones.

#### *Landscape Significance and Analysis of Integrity*

- preparation of a statement of significance for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS;
- analysis and evaluation using landscape characteristics identified by the National Register of Historic Places and in the *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*;
- identification of characteristics that are significant and contribute to the integrity of the cultural landscape; identification of characteristics and elements that are supporting, non-contributing, or missing; and locating/labeling contributing, supporting, non-contributing features on a site plan;
- preparation of integrity assessment of the resource, using National Register criteria, the CLR scope of work, and guidance in the *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*.

### **Project Methodology**

Basic services and project methodology are as follows:

#### *Task 1: Project Start-up Meeting*

On 7 October, 2002, the National Park Service initiated a conference call to discuss project start-up considerations, such as NPS objectives, park issues relative to the cultural landscape, and management concerns. Conference participants also reviewed the scope of work and finalized the project schedule. Participants included:

- Jill Cowley, NPS Intermountain Region, Santa Fe, incoming COTR
- Tom Keohan, NPS Intermountain Region, Denver, outgoing COTR
- Darlene Koontz, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, Superintendent
- Chris Ford, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, Curator
- Mike McWright, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Facility Manager
- Matt Connor, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Interpretive Ranger
- Jesse Harris, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Rancher
- Anita Dore, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Administrative Officer
- Benjamin Ford, Rivanna Archeological Consulting, Landscape Historian
- Rob McGinnis, JMA, Project Manager
- Krista Schneider, JMA, Project Landscape Architect
- Matt Whitaker, JMA, Project Designer

#### *Task 2: Data Collection and Research*

This task involved the collection and review of relevant data provided by the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, including recent natural and cultural resource management documents. Research of known sources, particularly those in the park and NPS archives, were emphasized. These include, but are not limited to the following: the “National Historic Landmark Boundary Study for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch,” 2001 (approved 2002); the “National Register of Historic Places Registration

Form for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch/Warren Ranch,” 2002 (signed 2003); *Administrative History of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch*, 1997; *Grant-Kohrs Ranch Historic Resource Study, Historic Structure Report and Historical Data*, 1977; *Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Environmental Impact Statement for a General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan*, 1993; *Cultural Landscape Inventory and Analysis*, 1991; *Draft Conrad and Nellie Warren Residence Historic Structure Report*, 2001; *Draft Cultural Landscape Inventory*, 1997; *Draft Warren Hereford Ranch Historic Structure Report*, 2001; *Draft Level II Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch House*, 2003; historic photographs and maps provided by the park; and the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data that served as the basis for existing conditions base maps. See the bibliography at the end of this report for full citations.

The purpose of the research phase was to consolidate and summarize the ample historic research already conducted for Grant-Kohrs Ranch, emphasizing the evolution of the cultural landscape. For areas where historic information was complete, research was not duplicated, but rather incorporated into the CLR. New research was limited to the use of primary and secondary source materials relating to component landscapes that were not already documented.

The data collection and research occurred in several phases throughout the study. Prior to the site visit, JMA received a shipment of documents originating from the park archives. During the site visit in October 2002, Rivanna Archaeological Consulting landscape historian, Benjamin Ford, worked with park curator, Chris Ford, to conduct directed research. This task involved gathering and copying primary and secondary sources, including manuscripts, and historic maps and photographs, beyond those that had already been provided, relevant to the project scope. Subsequent to the site visit, data collection of resources in other repositories including the University of Virginia and the Bureau of Land Management, as well as other information requests directed to NPS personnel, were conducted via the internet and telephone. Once the initial directed research was completed, a more thorough review of the data was undertaken in order to begin drafting the CLR. Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS staff also conducted extensive research to provide JMA and Rivanna Archeological Consulting with additional information on NPS-era ranching and natural resource management. Throughout the project, JMA has continued to maintain communication with Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS personnel regarding the development of the report.

### *Task 3: Site History Documentation*

Based upon guidance provided in the scope of work and research conducted in preparation of the site physical history, this chapter is divided into 12 separate periods. These periods were defined both by the documented changes to the landscape and the cultural contexts of their occupation:

- the PaleoIndian Period ca. 11,000 – 8,000 before present (BP);
- the Archaic Period, ca. 8,000 to 4,000 BP;
- the Late Prehistoric Period, ca. 4,000 BP to 1700;
- The Pend d'Oreille, Flathead, Shoshone, and the early European settlement of Western Montana, ca. 1700 – 1860;
- The establishment of the John Grant Ranch, Cottonwood, and incipient stock raising, 1860-1866;
- The Conrad Kohrs Home Ranch and the Growth and Development of the Ranching Industry on the Northern Plains, 1866-1887;

- The Decline of the Open Range and Dissolution of the Kohrs-Bielenberg Ranch, 1877-1922;
- The Conrad K. Warren Era: Rebuilding the Ranch and the application of scientific advances in veterinary medicine, breeding, feed, crops and mechanical systems, 1922-1940;
- The Warren Hereford Ranch, 1940-1958;
- Post-Dispersal and efforts to establish a National Park, 1958-1972;
- The National Park Service and Early Conservation Efforts, 1972-1988; and
- Acquisition of the Con Warren Ranch, 1988-2002.

Each chronological period is preceded by a brief introduction that summarizes the history and development of the period. This is followed by a more detailed contextual and site specific historical narrative. The narrative is followed by a chronological outline of landscape features. The landscape features are adopted from the *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (1998).

A series of period plans at the scale of the entire ranch have also been created to graphically demonstrate the changes in the overall landscape between 1859 and the present. These are digital maps, created by combining historical map information with current GIS mapping:

- John Grant Development, circa 1865;
- Kohrs-Bielenberg Ranch, circa 1895;
- Kohrs-Bielenberg Ranch, circa 1920;
- Warren Hereford Ranch, circa 1955;
- NPS Ownership and Management, circa 1982; and
- Existing Conditions, circa 2003.

#### *Task 4: Site Visit and Existing Conditions Field Investigations*

In October 2002, JMA and Rivanna Archaeological Consulting personnel traveled to the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS to meet with park personnel and conduct research and existing conditions documentation. Project objectives were also discussed with park personnel during a meeting that took place on October 17, 2002, and involved review of preservation and resource management goals regarding the Grant-Kohrs Ranch cultural landscape. A ranch orientation tour was narrated by the NPS personnel during which time cultural resource issues were discussed.

The following people were in attendance during the orientation meeting:

- Chris Ford, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Curator
- Mike McWright, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Facility Manager
- Ben Bobowski, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Natural Resource Specialist
- Jesse Harris, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Rancher
- Peggy Gow, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Museum Technician
- Lyndel Meikle, Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Interpretive Ranger
- Benjamin Ford, Rivanna Archaeological Consulting, Landscape Historian
- Rob McGinnis, JMA, Project Manager
- Krista Schneider, JMA, Project Landscape Architect
- Matt Whitaker, JMA, Project Designer

Between October 17-21, JMA CLR project team members Rob McGinnis, Krista Schneider, and Matt Whitaker conducted field investigations. Existing conditions base maps, generated from

GIS data provided by the park, were evaluated for accuracy. Team members annotated the base maps to include revisions and additional details that would be incorporated into the electronic file. Photographs were taken of representative landscape features, with photographic station points indicated on the base maps.

#### *Task 5: Existing Conditions Documentation*

The documentation of existing conditions is provided in this report through cross-referenced narrative, graphic, and photographic material. Landscape features are discussed within a framework established in *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports; Content, Process, and Techniques* and National Register Bulletin #30, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*, which identify various landscape characteristics through which existing conditions documentation can be organized and presented.

Existing conditions documentation was prepared through the review and compilation of information derived from existing conditions base mapping, field investigations, review of photographs taken in the field, and examination of park planning documents, park files, and NPS reports. For the purpose of this CLR, the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS landscape features are described according to the following landscape characteristic categories: natural systems, spatial organization, land use (which includes livestock/grazing practices), circulation, topography, vegetation (natural as well as cultural), buildings and structures, views, small-scale features, and missing & archeological resources.

Photographs of representative landscape features are included in the existing conditions chapter of the CLR and are referenced in the text. A documentation notebook containing all existing conditions photographs, negatives, and electronic copies on CD will be provided to the NPS to supplement the representative photographic coverage included in the report.

Existing conditions documentation and plans were compiled for the overall ranch and for each of the nine component landscapes. The existing conditions plans for the component landscapes serve as combination period plans and existing conditions plans because they include both historical and existing conditions information. These plans also identify contributing, supporting, non-contributing, and missing elements through cross-referenced inventory tables.

#### *Task 6: Analysis and Evaluation*

JMA and Rivanna Archaeological Consulting evaluated the significance of the site based on the information contained in the site's National Register nomination, the NHL Boundary Study, and on the site physical history and context elaborated in Chapter Two. This evaluation explains the relationship of the landscape to National Register criteria, proposed historic contexts, and recommends a period of significance based upon the further study and evaluation of the cultural landscape contained within this report.

The analysis and evaluation section assesses the integrity of the cultural landscape, and is based upon a comparative analysis of historic period(s) of significance features and existing landscape features. These features are also assessed as contributing, supporting, non-contributing, or missing under National Register criteria. The historic integrity of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch is assessed based on integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Three additional criteria relating to biotic resources (species composition, biotic community organization, and land management techniques), which replace material, design, and workmanship, respectively, are also considered. Integrity is assessed for the overall landscape, as well as for each of the component landscapes.

## Study Boundaries

The CLR study area conforms to the official boundaries of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site (see Figure 1-2). Located in the intermountain grassland region of west central Montana and nestled in the Clark Fork River valley between the Flint Creek Mountain Range to the west and the Continental Divide to the east, the site lies adjacent to the city of Deer Lodge with easy access to Interstate 90. The Deer Lodge and Butte National Forests frame the valley on both sides. Deer Lodge, the historic trading town that was established by John Grant and other fur trade era settlers in the late 1850s, forms the park's southeastern boundary. Missoula is about 80 miles northwest and Butte is 40 miles south of the historic ranch. Mountains on either side provide a dramatic backdrop to the long, broad, semi-arid Deer Lodge Valley.

The immediate vicinity of Grant-Kohrs Ranch is relatively developed with urbanization on the south and east boundaries of the site. Yet despite the proximity of the town, the ranch setting remains relatively pastoral with views to the north and west dominated by pastureland of the western foothills and the meandering Clark Fork River.

When Congress established the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS in 1972, authorization was given to acquire not more than 2,000 acres of land in the Deer Lodge Valley for the purpose of preserving and interpreting the site. Land acquisitions and scenic easements throughout the 1980s and 1990s increased the size of the site from its original 217 to 1,618 acres. Within the bounds of the historic site, 1,326 acres of land are fee owned by the federal government (see Figure 1-3). These lands comprise the developed areas of the Grant-Kohrs and Warren Hereford Ranches, as well as the pasture land and hay fields on either side of the Clark Fork River. Approximately 165 acres of land along the site's northern boundary, currently owned by Lars Olsen, are under scenic easements with the NPS, while the City of Deer Lodge retains ownership of approximately 70 acres for sewage treatment. The remaining 57 acres remains under ownership of the Union Pacific Railroad which leased the rail line to the Burlington Northern Railroad until 2003, when Burlington Northern Railroad purchased the line. This line remains active.

Of particular note is the land encompassing the view shed along the ranch's western boundary. Containing approximately 1,130 acres, this land has been identified as an area to be included within the site boundary through the purchase of scenic easements or similar management strategy. In both the 1991 Cultural Landscape Analysis and the 1993 Development Concept Plan, this property was identified as an area of land that should be protected from future development, as it has a high degree of integrity that contributes to the historic significance of the site. While the scope of work for this CLR does not include detailed historical investigation or documentation of this land, this study will provide a general overview of the existing conditions, significance, and integrity associated with this upland pasture area.

## Summary of Findings

Based on the research, analysis, and documentation conducted for preparation of this CLR, the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS cultural landscape has been found to possess national significance according to National Historic Landmark Criterion 1 in the areas of Agriculture and Exploration/Settlement, as well as state and national significance under National Register Criteria A, B, and C in the areas of Agriculture, Architecture, and Engineering.

In addition to the theme 'Establishment and Growth of the Home Ranch and the Development of the Ranching Industry on the Northern Plains, 1862-1919' identified in the National Historic Landmark significance statement, this CLR recommends that the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National

Historic Site be considered significant at a state and national level for its associations with modern ranching techniques and practices. The National Register documentation identified the Grant-Kohrs/Warren Ranch District as possessing significance at a state and national level under Criterion A for its significant associations with the history of agriculture, and at a state and national level under Criterion C for its vernacular architecture. The National Register District predominantly focused on the Warren era historic resources that had a state level of significance, but also included all 68 historic resources (23 contributing, 45 noncontributing) that were previously identified as part of the National Historic Landmark District. The existing National Register documentation also did not find that the Grant-Kohrs Ranch / Warren Ranch historic district possessed significance according to Criterion B. Based on the research, analysis, and documentation conducted for the preparation of this study, this CLR agrees with the National Register documentation that the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS cultural landscape has been found to possess significance according to National Register Criterion A at a state and national level, and Criterion C at a state and national level, but also recommends that the Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS cultural landscape be considered significant according to Criterion B at both a state and national level for its association with the lives of Johnny Grant, Conrad Kohrs, and Conrad Warren.

In order for Warren era resources associated with modern ranching techniques and practices to be evaluated as a nationally significant, the keeper of the National Register and the National Park Service National Historic Landmark staff have determined that such a finding would require a national theme study of twentieth century cattle ranches. This theme study would evaluate the Grant-Kohrs Ranch/Warren Ranch within the broader national context of ranching and agricultural activities in the West, and would need to evaluate the Grant-Kohrs Ranch/Warren Ranch in terms of its significance and physical integrity, as compared to all other historic twentieth-century cattle ranches. This process is identical to the theme study that resulted in the designation of Grant-Kohrs Ranch as a National Historic Landmark (for its associations with the open range era of cattle ranching) in 1960. The authors of this CLR recommend that such a twentieth-century ranching theme study be completed, and believe that it may result in a recommendation of national significance for the Conrad Warren era resources at the ranch.

Based on an evaluation of the CLR's physical history and historic context, the authors recommend a period of significance of between 1862 and 1982 for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. The 1862-1982 period of significance includes two sub-periods. The first period of significance, as identified in the National Historic Landmark Boundary Study, begins with the establishment of the Johnny Grant ranch in 1862 and ends with the dissolution of Kohrs and Bielenberg cattle empire in 1919. The second period of significance, as identified in the National Register documentation, begins with Conrad Warren's arrival at the Kohrs Ranch in 1929 and ends with his retirement from active ranching in 1982. This end date of the period of significance extends the end date of the period identified in the National Register documentation (1958) to include the ranching adaptations that Warren made to adjust to economic conditions until his retirement in 1982. These ranching adaptations made by Warren, and the physical features of the Warren Ranch cultural landscape that supported them, are characteristic of small rancher responses to increased corporate control and the implementation of the feedlot system nationwide. During a period of sweeping change in the ranching industry in the greater northwest, the actions of Conrad Warren and the physical features of the Warren Ranch cultural landscape are representative of the larger region and nationwide context of ranching during the mid-twentieth century.

Overall, the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site retains a relatively high degree of integrity to the 1862-1982 period of significance. The landscape resources present on the ranch illustrate a 120 year continuum of cattle ranching operations that includes the Grant, Kohrs, and Warren

periods of ownership and management. Responses to natural features and systems, patterns of spatial organization, physical construction, and functional relationships of buildings, structures, fences, fields, corrals, views, roads, and constructed water features very well convey the historical significance of the ranch to Park visitors. While the intensity of land use and diversity of livestock has been reduced during the period of NPS ownership, the landscape still conveys the character and use of the historic period.

### Description of Component Landscapes

While the park has identified a number of important areas within the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, it was ultimately JMA's responsibility to define and determine the exact number of component landscape areas and their boundaries. These areas are primarily the result of design, construction, and agricultural/grazing practices under Kohrs/Bielenberg and Warren. These component landscapes are discussed in detail in Chapter Three of this report, and are as follows:

- **Home Ranch Complex:** This area includes all landscape features associated with the core complex of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch. It is bounded by the railroad corridor on the east, the riparian corridor of the Clark Fork River on the west, and consists of the Lower Yards, Lower House Yards, Bunkhouse Yards, Johnson Creek Field, West Corrals, and West Feedlots.
- **East Feed Lot/Warren Hereford Ranch:** This area consists of the area east of the railroad corridor, which was developed by Con Warren. It contains the land bordered by the main entry road on the south, the park boundary on the east, the rail corridor on the west, and the south edge of Front Field on the north;
- **Grant-Kohrs Residence:** This consists of the features contained with the domestic landscape immediately surrounding the ranch home built by John Grant, and later, Conrad Kohrs;
- **Warren Residence:** This consists of the features contained with the domestic landscape immediately surrounding the home built by Conrad Warren;
- **Pasture/Hay Field:** This area includes the irrigated and low-lying lands bordering the Clark Fork riparian corridor. It consists of Stuart Field, the Lower Yard Fields, the North Meadows, L-Barn Fields, Western Hay Fields, Olson Fields, as well as the Front Field located to the north of the East Feed Lot.
- **Upland Pasture:** This area includes the land west of the Westside Ditch, and includes Big Gulch, Little Gulch, and Taylor Field, as well as the ranges and hilltops in between. While this area contains both hay fields and pasture land, it is considered a separate component landscape because of its relative sense of isolation from the rest of the ranch.
- **Riparian Area/Woodland:** This area consists of the riparian woodlands found along the Clark Fork River corridor, Johnson Creek, Cottonwood Creek, and the Olson property along the park's northern boundary.
- **Railroad Bed & Barrow Pit/Wetland:** This area consists of the linear railroad corridor and utility lines associated with it. It also includes the depressed wetland areas (barrow pits) bordering the railroad corridor.
- **Development Zone:** This area contains the Visitor Center building, restrooms, curatorial building, and visitor parking lot. A portion of Johnson Creek comprises the southern boundary of this zone.

Map Sources: Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data of lands owned/leased was provided by the National Park Service, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS electronic archives, titled "CLI-Poly." Land ownership/lease information provided by Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.

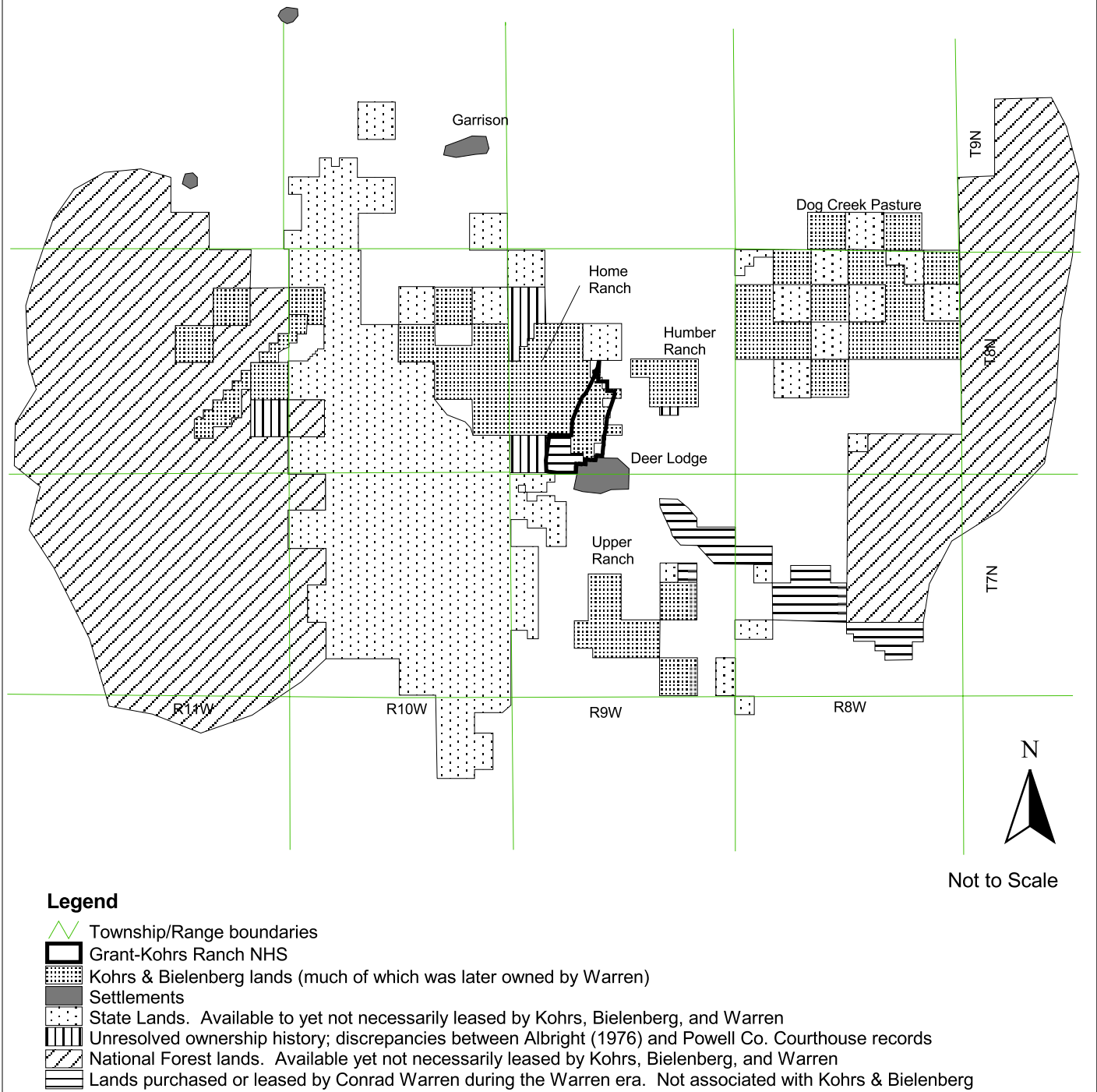


Figure 1-1: Extent of lands owned, leased or available for lease to Kohrs, Bielenberg, and Warren, 1866-1892.



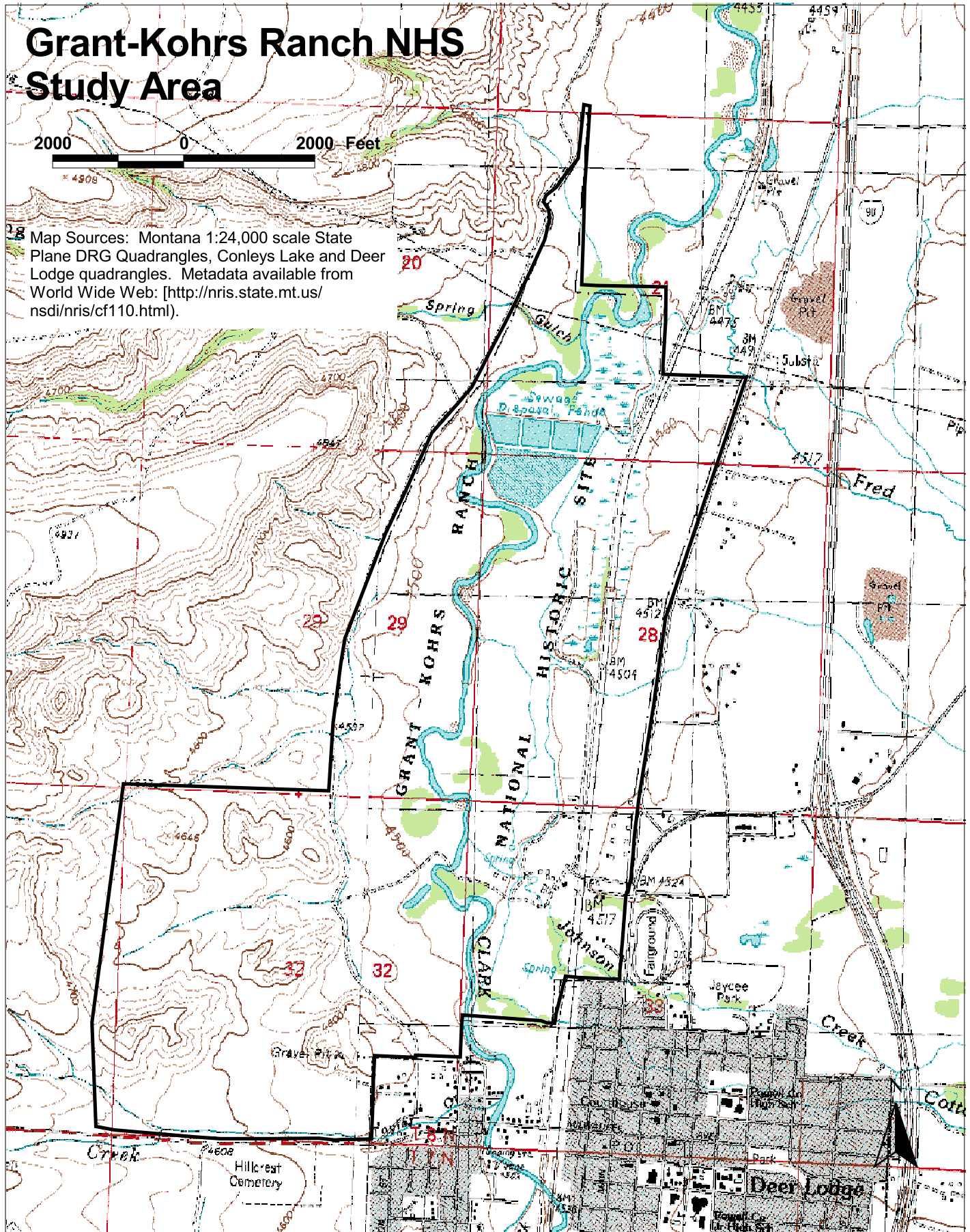


Figure 1-2: Study Area








# Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS

## Land Ownership

2000 0 2000 Feet



### Ownership

-  City-owned
-  NPS Scenic Easement
-  Railroad
-  Federal Government
-  Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS
-  Buildings and Structures
-  Roads

Map Sources: Base Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data derived from National Park Service, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site GIS Program, compiled 1998. Metadata available from World Wide Web: [<http://www.nps.gov/gis/metadata/grko/>]. GIS data supplemented by 2002 field observations and 1994 color aerial photographs provided by the National Park Service, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.

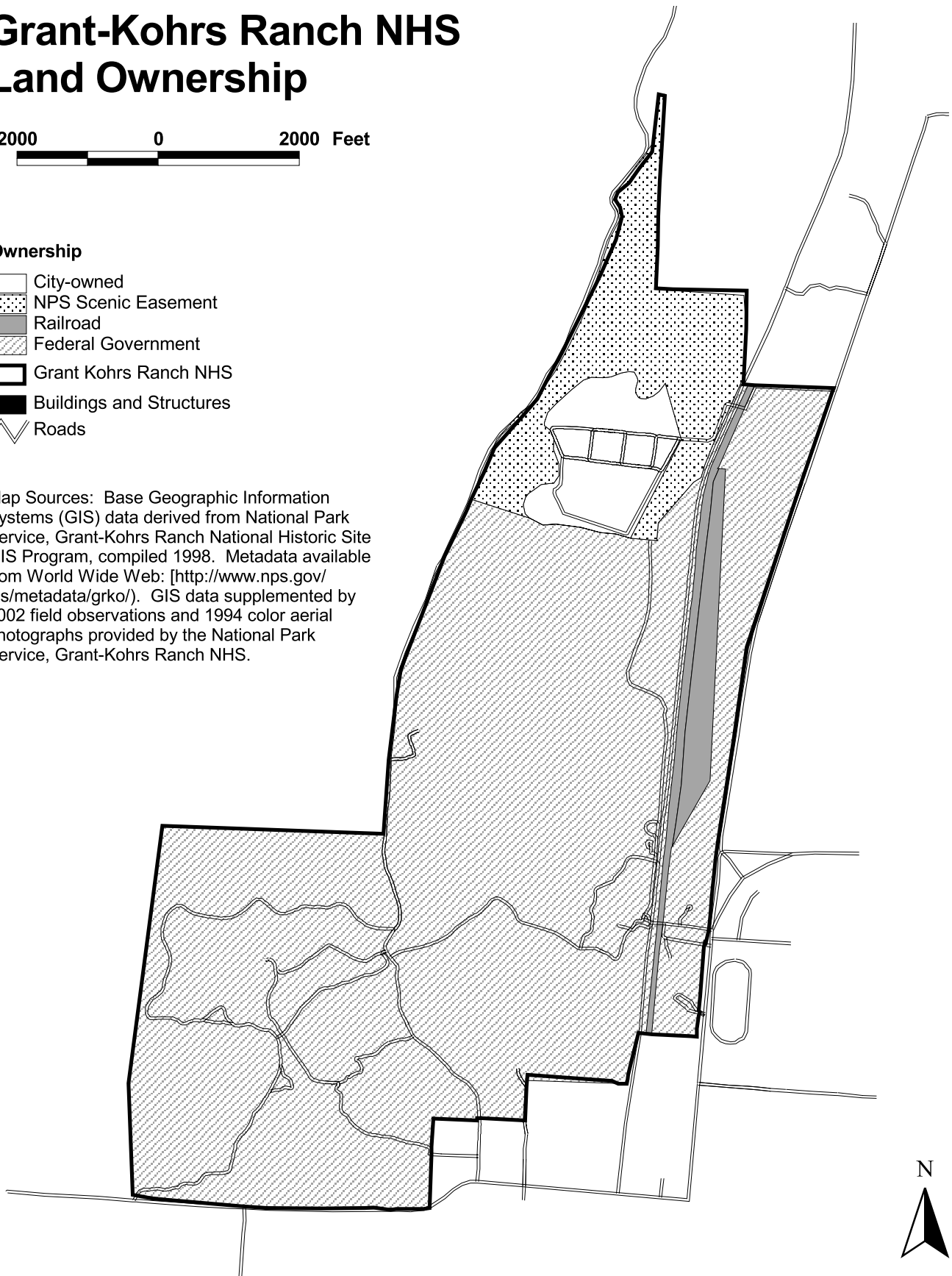


Figure 1-3: Land Ownership